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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/804,335	03/19/2004	Leslie LiDonnici	1363-3	7024

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EXAMINER

COMSTOCK, DAVID C

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3732

DATE MAILED: 08/10/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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## Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/804,335

Applicant(s)

LIDONNICI, LESLIE

Examiner

David Comstock

Art Unit

3732

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 May 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-32 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 6-18, 21-28, 30 and 32 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 5, 19, 20, 29 and 31 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 09 May 2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>06/04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 2, 10-12, 21-23, 27 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Symbas et al. (4,627,421).

Symbas et al. disclose a metal sternal retractor comprising end walls 28A, 28B, each having an integrally formed upper and lower wall 41 extending orthogonally from, and interconnected by, the end wall. The device has a flat C-shaped transverse cross-sectional profile. The walls are placed between exposed sternal halves to exert a force against and retract the same. (See figures 1 and 3 and column 2, line 50 - column 4, line 8.)

Claims 1-4, 10 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Colon (D440,268).

Colon discloses a molded plastic device comprising an end wall interconnecting an upper wall and a lower wall extending orthogonally from the end wall. The device includes curved or arcuate end walls. The device has a U or C-shaped cross-section. (See Figure 1.)

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 13-18, 24-26 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Symbas et al. (4,627,421).

Symbas et al. disclose the claimed invention except for explicitly disclosing a radius of curvature of about 8.625 inches, an upper wall thickness of about 0.1875 inches, a lower wall thickness of about 0.0625 inches, or walls of equal thickness. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the retractor of Symbas et al. with a radius of curvature of about 8.625 inches, an upper wall thickness of about 0.1875 inches, a lower wall thickness of about 0.0625 inches, or walls of equal thickness, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233. It would have been further obvious to form the device of plastic, polycarbonate, stainless steel, or titanium, since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. *In re Leshin*, 125 USPQ 416.

Claims 6-9 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Symbas et al. (4,627,421) in view of Jacques (2,238,563).

Symbas et al. disclose the claimed invention except for the spike on the end wall. Jacque discloses a similar device having a spike 21 on an end wall 20 in order to retain the device in place and free the hands of the operator (see Jacques, Fig. 7 and col. 3, lines 37-44). It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to provide the retractor of Symbas et al. with a spike on the end wall, in view of Jacque, in order to retain the device in place and free the hands of the operator. It would have been further obvious to make an element of the device removable, since it has been held that constructing a formerly integral structure in various elements involves only routine skill in the art. *Nerwin v. Erlichman*, 168 USPQ 177, 179.

#### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claims 5, 19, 20, 29 and 31 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

#### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments filed 09 May 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., the device being "independent of any other structure") are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification,

limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993). It is noted that claim 1 refers to the *capability* of the device, i.e., that it is independently *placeable* against the exposed end of the sternal half.

Furthermore, it is noted that the specification must clearly set forth the definition of "independent" explicitly and with reasonable clarity, deliberateness, and precision. Exemplification is not an explicit definition. Even explicit definitions can be subject to varying interpretations. See *Teleflex, Inc. v. Ficosa North America Corp.*, 63 USPQ2d 1374, 1381 (Fed. Cir. 2002), *Rexnord Corp. v. Laitram Corp.*, 60 USPQ2d 1851, 1854 (Fed. Cir. 2001), and MPEP 2111.01. It is noted that "independent" can simply refer to their location on separate arms, among several reasonable interpretations. Likewise, it could refer to their ability to pivot separately and distinctly, etc.

In response to applicant's argument that the device of Symbas is not independently placeable and that it does not disclose a blade that engages a surface opposite the space of the device, a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim. In a claim drawn to a process of making, the intended use must result in a manipulative difference as compared to the prior art. See *In re Casey*, 370 F.2d 576, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 312 F.2d 937, 939, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963).

In response to applicant's argument that Colon is nonanalogous art it is noted that "Arguments that the alleged anticipatory prior art is 'nonanalogous art' or 'teaches away from the invention' or is not recognized as solving the problem solved by the claimed invention, are not 'germane' to a rejection under section 102." *Twin Disc, Inc. v. United States*, 231 USPQ 417, 424 (Cl. Ct. 1986) (quoting *In re Self*, 671 F.2d 1344, 213 USPQ 1, 7 (CCPA 1982)). See also *State Contracting & Eng' g Corp. v. Condotte America, Inc.*, 346 F.3d 1057, 1068, 68 USPQ2d 1481, 1488 (Fed. Cir. 2003). A reference is no less anticipatory if, after disclosing the invention, the reference then disparages it. The question whether a reference "teaches away" from the invention is inapplicable to an anticipation analysis. *Celeritas Technologies Ltd. v. Rockwell International Corp.*, 150 F.3d 1354, 1361, 47 USPQ2d 1516, 1522-23 (Fed. Cir. 1998). See also *Atlas Powder Co. v. IRECO, Inc.*, 190 F.3d 1342, 1349, 51 USPQ2d 1943, 1948 (Fed. Cir. 1999). MPEP 2131.05.

### ***Conclusion***

**THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the

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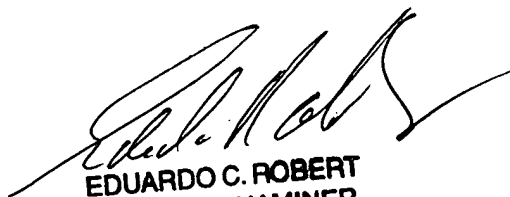
shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David Comstock whose telephone number is (571) 272-4710. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



D. Comstock  
7 August 2005



EDUARDO C. ROBERT  
PRIMARY EXAMINER